

I HAVE SEEN HELL RAINED DOWN ON PEARL HARBOR!

Sometimes I wake at night shaking from the terrible nightmare that I saw rain from the sky that awful sabbath morning of December 7th. It takes me awhile though to get over shaking. No, I haven't been seeing too many newsreels. I've just been through reality that you'll never see in any theatre. I was in Pearl Harbor when it was treacherously attacked by the Japanese. I know what it is for hell to drop out of the heavens.

While the bombs were falling heaviest, however, when the harbor was being subjected to the most terrific shellfire, I experienced one of those moments of exquisite happiness-----the sort---that comes to a man only once in a lifetime. That moment can never be recaptured, but my whole life was worth living for it.

All my friends that had fought among one another, had forgotten their arguments and were fighting hand in hand, they had the courage of super men. It was the paleness of fatigue, accentuated by the smoke and oil from sinking ships all around us.

And it's because of those friends of mine that had the courage of super men and the will to carry on, that I'm going back into that inferno I was fortunate enough to escape from. Sure I was scared. Sure I still wake up trembling. But so, God help me, I'm going back.

I'm going to face those Jap rats again, the next time I'll be giving it, not taking it. The next time they'll be on the wrong end of the guns. Oh! it may not be in Pearl Harbor again, or it may not be in Australia, but I hope to what's left of heaven that it'll be in Japan.

I'd like to give them hot lead off their own soil. I'd like them to see how it feels to have their homes wrecked, to have their wives and children fall in bloody pools on the streets, then, maybe there would never be another World War III.

Every time I pull the trigger, I'm going to say: This one is for Pearl Harbor, and this one is for the men and and my friends who died that day.

I'm an American. I owe my life to that fact, as you can see. Why should I feel so strongly about Pearl Harbor? Anybody who was there, and saw the immortal stand American Patriots took against tyranny would weep at the memory.

But I also have another message. If the bombs ever should rain down on our shores, if the people here must take to cellars and shelters, if it looks to them like the world has come to the end--still we must not forget our human decencies.

If you are attempted to throw all restraint to the winds when the shaking earth appears to swallow you up, remember it may not close over your head after all. If you should perish, the good you do will live after you.

And Pearl Harbor will never die! Though she was dealt a ugly treacherous blow, it will rise to live again. The final chapter of its history, has not been written. Glory will still be spread on its pages.

RAY RICHMOND: 6-20-2003

Joined Navy Feb. 27, 1941. Did boot camp in San Diego. 6 weeks bootcamp and then Okie. Went over to Hawaii on the Warden a liberty ship. Battle station was 5"-51 broadside, No.5. Duty station was on the boat deck.. No. 5 was in a casemate. He said four broadside guns on each side. (I think this is wrong). Each broadside gun was in a casemate. They had gun shutters. Muzzle would still stick out 3-4' feet when the shutter was down. Shutters would protect the casemate during a storm. First powderman, second powderman, first shellman, second shellman, trainer, pointer, gun captain. On the 6ht they were chipping paint and such to get ready for the Admiral's inspection. He rated liberty the next day. He got up early to get ready. Would have gone ashore at 0800. Was in the shower when the first torpedo hit. When your side rated liberty your washroom was really full so you went over to the port side. Went through blower room to the washroom and it was full so he came back through and went to his own shower because there was hardly anybody there. Shower was just little forward of the blower room. He was on the second deck. He said this was below the armored deck. He was about 150 feet from the galley. While he was shaving it felt like somebody picked up the ship, shook it up, and then dropped it back in the water. Heard the word past, Man your battlestations, this is no shit. He got his gear together and was walking over to his bunk station by the medical department. He put his razor into his locker. Ship started rolling over. Went over the side in the nude. Made his way along the galley because it had a rail. No lights. If you didn't know the ship you were lost. Four torpedoes hit before he got out of the shower. Less than 30 seconds past between first four torpedoes. Went to his locker after forth torpedo but didn't have time to dress. Ladders were lose at the bottom. Struggling to reach the casemate up above, 5th casemate. He couldn't reach high enough. Commander Kenworthy and Hobby were there to help all the fellas out of the casemate. Got to the passageway that surrounded the ship in front of the guns. He looked down but couldn't see the water. A long drop to the blister leg. Japs were strafing. Saw bullets strike the water. Ship is lying on its side. He almost cleared the blister leg but his tailbone hit it. Had to scoot around the bottom. Had metal plates like shingles on a roof. He hit the water. 8-10 inches of oil. Lots of body pieces in the water between the Okie and Maryland. He had to swim underwater to escape the flames. Each time that he would come to the surface for air he had to agitate the water to separate the oil. Get a gulp of air then go back down below. Rope ladderway thrown over the side of the Maryland. Grabbed hold of the waterway. Eveyone using it as a stepladder. His class ring came off because his fingers had gotten so thin from being in the water so long. Held his class ring in his hand. He'd eaten waffles for breakfast. He got sick drinking the water and threw up. He was just about ready to give up. Somebody grabbed him by his hair and pulled him out. Got a toe-hold on the ladder way. Guy was his buddy. They always went ashore together. He was a baker. Ray hasn't heard anything about him since. Jesse Foglesong. Ray couldn't thank him because he never saw him again. Ray's carried his picture ever since. Went to Washington to try and find him. Every morning on the boat deck Ray would reach down through the hatch and Jesse would hand him a doughnut. Made \$21 a month. Everyone liked to go ashore with Ray because he had the money. After you picked up all your chits you had about three dollars left. After hours, he got permission from the chief boatswain, he'd go on the fantail to sketch the boys. He'd charge three dollars a ketch.. Charcoal drawing. Had them lined up from ship to shore. Ensign Stern asked Ray if he would do a portrait of his wife. He brought his wife aboard ship to his stateroom. He said a noncom and a Marine are guarding officer's country. Every Marine would give him a dirty look for going into officer's country. Had about a week more to go when the raid occurred. Ensign Stern was killed and his compartment was flooded and the picture went down with the ship. Stern's wife cam to visit Ray in the hospital.

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When Ray got on the Maryland he helped with the AA batteries. Case catchers weren't wearing asbestos gloves. Hot casing had burned the flesh from their hands, down to the bone. After the raid ended Ray fell down, he couldn't walk. They put him on a board and took him to the Marine mess hall on Ford Island. Put Ray and another guy in a pickup truck. Guy never moved. Ray thinks he was dead. Took him to Aiea. He was there for a week before they figured out he was Navy. Then they transferred him to the Navy hospital. Had a broken back and a fractured hip from hitting the blister leg. They put him in a body cast. Hospital room was loaded with people. They cut a hole in the cast over Ray's stomach so he could breathe. Before they could finish with another guy who was next to him in a full cast they had to leave to tend to a more critical case. They moved Ray and the guy to a ward. Guy was directly across from Ray. About 0100 they had flashlight with a film over it. They were all around the guy. His appendix had burst. They had to cut through the cast to remove them. Ray weighed 126 when he was admitted. When they cut the cast off he weighed 98 pounds. He was in the hospital for eight months. Nurses would sit with Ray every night after things had quieted down. He would sketch the portraits. Doctor couldn't figure out how to rehabilitate him. After seeing his sketches he sent him to New York to the navy recruiting bureau. He became a commercial artist. They gave him a piece of paper that said construction battalion, US Navy. Monkey wrench and hammer in hind legs. Front legs had a tommy gun. His painting was responsible for the name. Ray had the original in black and white. Ray was on dinner stages all over. Red Cross had him doing interviews. Was on the radio. First person back from the war to go to New York. Had a 33-1/3 record and it said. They had a Man Your Battle Station series that said remember last December. Pearl Harbor reenactment. He gave an interview on that. Reporter from channel ten came by.

Seventeen months later, after the ship was raised, they sent him gear from his locker. Wallet, coin purse, knife that his father had owned, his razor. Only thing that wasn't any good was the rubber mouth piece he had used for boxing at Friday night smokers. Everything was oil soaked and burnt crisp. He had a card in his wallet; sons of American legion. His name was on it. And a bank deposit slip had his name on it. This is how the Ided him. They sent it all the way to New York in a big wooden box. Ray had to pay the cost of freight. It cost him a fortune. Gillette Razor offered him a bunch of money for the razor. He said no way. Worked with John Falter and Howard Scott at recruiting bureau. Did posters. Howard Scott had done all the billboards for the old Nash cars that looked like a box. Had a production facility. Made documentary movies. Did a Pearl Harbor movies. Ray would describe the colors in the explosions. Ray has photographs of the paintings they did.

Got transferred to Fort Skylar in the Bronx. The Maritime Academy. Boss was Admiral T.T. Craven. They were teaching 90-day wonders. All the officers that taught these guys had never been to sea. The Admiral called Ray in one day. Said that he and Ray were the only ones that had been to sea. Told Ray he had to wear campaign bars. Ray said he didn't have nay. Admiral said he would get him some. Ray's job there was as a motion picture operator. He would run a movie for these 90-days wonders on Saturday night. That was his only duty. Told Ray to take someone with him to the Brooklyn Navy Yard to get them. He got two projectors off a ship. He had to build a booth to put them in. Put the generators in the basement. He had a 110-foot throw from his projectors to the screen. It was in a basketball court. But you could see shadows on the screen. So Ray went back to the Navy Yard and got two 9-inch lenses, which he put on the projector. Image was then sharp. Voices were garbled. Ray needed to fix the acoustics. Went to the Admiral to ask for some signal flags. Said he needed fifteen hundred. Admiral asked him if he was going to signal the enemy. Ran wire all the way across the basketball court about six feet apart. Strung the signal flags up on them. Ran a movie every Saturday. During the week he would run the music to make sure the sound was all right. Left at 1600. If anybody tried to put him on a detail he sent them to the Admiral. Admiral told him he was wearing out the carpet in his office. One Friday they had to stand inspection. Ray's in the back. All the 90-day wonders were in the front. Craven says Richmond, front and center. Presented Ray with a Purple Heart. Said thank you for Pearl Harbor. Ray said it wasn't me. If the ocean had been land there wouldn't have been a man that could have caught him. He stayed there until he got out of the Navy. End of his two shore duty. They sent him to St. Albens Naval hospital to see if he was

qualified for sea duty. Officer was on the phone. Told him to take off his clothes. Said you look alright to me. Didn't even check him out. Officer was making a reservation for a weekend fishing trip on somebody's yacht. Went to Shumacher, CA. Training and distribution center there. Waiting for his orders to go overseas. They didn't have a bunk for him or anything. Went over to the Gold Theatre and asked if he could run the movies. Some guy at the theatre (I assume an officer) told him there was no way eh should go overseas, let the young guys go. Told him to put his gear at the theatre and sleep. Told him to grab his gear and go to the hospital. They put him in a bunk. Doctor came by at sick call the next morning. Told his scribe to survey this man. Six weeks later he got his orders to be discharged. Survey means to give somebody their discharge. Got out of the service in New York and opened a leather shop. By the old Madison Square Garden, across the street. When the rodeo came to the Gardens he did custom work. Started putting leather on furniture with gold. Antique it and gold tool it. All different colors. Give him a color swatch and he could do it. He had Macys, Gimballs, Wannamaker, Wyman table in Chicago. He had three hundred dollars mustering out pay. He parlayed that \$300 into \$40,000 that year. He did that for two years and sold out. Sold his home on Long Island and moved to San Diego. Ray had a stroke and has no control over his right hand. He now carves left-handed.